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FROM THE FIELD

Baldwin's Transatlantic Reverberations: Between "Stranger in the Village" and *I Am Not Your Negro*

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Abstract

James Baldwin's writing, his persona, as well as his public speeches, interviews, and discussions are undergoing a renewed reception in the arts, in queer and critical race studies, and in queer of color movements. Directed by Raoul Peck, the film *I Am Not Your Negro* decisively contributed to the rekindled circulation of Baldwin across the Atlantic. Since 2017, screenings and commentaries on the highly acclaimed film have prompted discussions about the persistent yet variously racialized temporospatial formations of Europe and the U.S. Stemming from a roundtable that followed a screening in Zurich in February 2018, this collective essay wanders between the audio-visual and textual matter of the film and Baldwin's essay "Stranger in the Village," which was also adapted into a film-essay directed by Pierre Koralnik, staging Baldwin in the Swiss village of Leukerbad. Privileging Black feminist, postcolonial, and queer of color perspectives, we identify three sites of Baldwin's transatlantic reverberations: situated knowledge, controlling images, and everyday sexual racism. In conclusion, we reflect on the implications of racialized, sexualized politics for today's Black feminist, queer, and trans of color movements located in continental Europe—especially in Switzerland and France.

Keywords: James Baldwin, sexualized racism, queer of color movements, white innocence, "Stranger in the Village," *I Am Not Your Negro*

James Baldwin's work is preeminent in discussions around race in the U.S. and has recently gained renewed attention among Black, feminist, and queer of color social

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and intellectual movements.[1] Baldwin's "born again, seen again" phenomenon has also touched continental Europe, as testified by several translations of his writings, by the highly acclaimed film *I Am Not Your Negro* (2017), and the success of the Baldwin-inspired essayist Ta-Nehisi Coates.[2] In short, Baldwin's writing prompts fascinating reverberations across contemporary Europe and the U.S.

In this article, we expand upon a discussion that tracked Baldwin's transatlantic reverberations by starting from Switzerland—a location which, interestingly, constitutes an important site of the renewed interest in Baldwin.[3] Indeed, rising attention has been paid to Baldwin's essay on Leukerbad from 1953, "Stranger in the Village," as well as to the 1962 film-essay (directed by Pierre Koralnik), which stages Baldwin reciting his essay in French as he returns to the Swiss village where he had stayed.[4] In the essay and the film-essay, Baldwin not only offers an analysis of postcolonial Switzerland, but also utilizes this tiny Swiss village in the Alps in order to contrast the racial formations of the U.S.A. and Europe.

How can Baldwin's writings and his artistic vision in general, "formed and informed by a Black queer imaginative capacity," contribute to today's understanding of racial relations in Europe?[5] Where can we follow, but where must we also part with Baldwin's transatlantic reflections on race? Privileging Black feminist, postcolonial, and queer of color perspectives, we wander between the audio-visual and textual matter of *I Am Not Your Negro* and "Stranger in the Village" and identify three sites of Baldwin's transatlantic reverberations: situated knowledge, controlling images, and everyday sexual racism. In conclusion, we reflect on the implication of racialized, sexualized politics for today's Black feminist, queer, and trans of color movements located in continental Europe—especially in Switzerland and France.

"No one resembling my father": Baldwin's Situatedness and Black Feminist and Radical Traditions

> In these days, no one resembling my father has yet made an appearance on the American cinema scene.[6]
>
> In spite of the fabulous myths proliferating in this country concerning the sexuality of black people, black men are still used, in the popular culture, as though they had no sexual equipment at all. Sidney Poitier, as a black artist, and a man, is also up against the infantile, furtive sexuality of his country. Both he and Harry Belafonte, for example, are sex symbols, though no one dares admit that, still less to use them as any of the Hollywood he-men are used.[7]

Jovita Pinto (Pinto): I want to start by pondering on Baldwin's way of writing and thinking. The "father" mentioned in the above-cited passage not only refers to Baldwin's father, but also alludes to Black men more broadly, who are represented in 1930s U.S. films as lazy, stupid, and forever smiling stereotypical figures. Baldwin's analysis entails a personal account as well as a testimonial of affects. Such a mode of writing has been rendered possible and "permissible" for theorization in the texts of women of color and other feminist work. Linking personal narrative with

sharp analysis, to me, this passage is a beautiful example of situated knowledge. Might this be a reason why Baldwin's writing finds so much resonance today? I am thinking specifically about his reception in the queer and intersectionally declared Black Lives Matter movement?

Paola Bacchetta (Bacchetta): Baldwin's work is situated, but I think that all writing is situated. We have a long history, in the U.S.A., of feminist and queer of color theorizations around situatedness. Examples are the Combahee River Collective and the group Dyketactics! in the 1970s, or *This Bridge Called My Back*, first published in 1981, a now classic anthology co-edited by Gloria Anzaldúa and Cherríe Moraga.[8]

Noémi Michel (Michel): Baldwin's situatedness resonates with two interconnected bodies of writings. First with Black feminism, with bell hooks and Audre Lorde, but also with non-U.S. Black women, such as Maryse Condé.[9] Among many others, these Black women powerfully narrate their situated experiences and by doing so, produce meaning about our world. Second, Baldwin resonates with the Black radical tradition, for instance with W. E. B. Du Bois's mode of deploying the first person in *The Souls of Black Folk*, or with Frantz Fanon's phenomenological accounts in *Black Skin, White Masks*.[10] It is also worth emphasizing a resonance with Cedric Robinson's *Black Marxism*—which is barely known in Europe.[11] Robinson contrasts the Black radical tradition with Western radical thought or Marxism. Western radicalism is concerned with finding the new "man," or reinventing the human, while the Black radical tradition is concerned with preserving "the collective being, the ontological totality."[12] Being Black means always having to struggle with having one's being repressed or suppressed. By amplifying experiences, lives, feelings, and liberatory modes of self-expression, Baldwin's work, I suggest, can be associated with the artistic and intellectual radical labor of preserving the collective being.

Bacchetta: I totally agree, and the struggle with having one's being violently oppressed has been very meaningfully engaged through the question of death in the Black radical tradition. Death, escaping from death, and especially emancipation from the context of deadly racism, constitute central themes in the Black radical tradition.[13] I was always struck with how death is a recurring theme for Baldwin. For him, as a child, identifying with life meant identifying with whiteness. In the context of the U.S.A., this speaks to apprehending death across subalternities, within and outside of Black life. Indeed, to grow up in the U.S.A. until the late 1960s meant to be exposed to the massacres of Native Americans every day on television; it constituted "entertainment." This constant re-representation of the massacre of indigenous bodies eternally repeats the logic of "native" genocide *and* operates alongside the massive erasure of present-day native life. U.S. society is founded on and perpetuated by the death of indigenous subjects, Black and other subjects of color. Baldwin reveals how he first identified with life and thus whiteness, but then reached the self-realization that since he was not white, he would actually be on the side of death.

"Fabulous myths": Controlling Images in Europe and the U.S.A.

Patricia Purtschert (Purtschert): I find it striking how Baldwin talks about the sexualization of Black men and Black masculinity; there is the link between rape and Black men, which for many decades had been a pretext for lynching in the U.S. context. Framing men of color as rapists has also been used as a pretext for anti-migrant politics, including its deadly effects in the Mediterranean Sea, as we can see with regard to the discussion around the so-called "Cologne incidents" in Germany.[14] Baldwin also evokes the "desexualization" of Black masculinity, which is intertwined with its hypersexualization. How would you describe the current hyper- and desexualizing of Black masculinity, as constitutive of racist gender regimes? Also, how would you assess the influence of Black self-representations developed within a culture of resistance in past decades?

Michel: I have conducted a critical study of the controversy regarding the so-called "sheep poster" by the extremist right Swiss People's Party (SVP).[15] This political poster staged white sheep expelling a single black sheep from their territory, which was symbolized by the Swiss flag, under the slogan "for more security." It became the object of a wide controversy about representations of foreigners and Blackness in Switzerland. I studied the counter-posters and other images that were circulating in the public sphere after 2007, supposedly protesting the racism of the initial poster. Strikingly, most of the representations of Blackness and Black people could fall under the category of "controlling images."[16] In its videos and leaflets, the SVP represented Black bodies as dangerous and criminal, thus following the image of supposed "Black hypersexuality." However, opponents to the SVP campaign would also reproduce sexualizing images. For instance, a right-wing party in Geneva, the Liberal Party, circulated two counter-posters: an image of a headless Black cis-male torso in front of a brown screen, and an image of Beyoncé—without any mention of her name—on the beach in a revealing swimsuit. The slogan accompanying these images was: "You want to chase the black sheep; we do not." These posters and counter-posters all exemplify the association of Blackness with sexualized fantasy within dominant Swiss and European public culture.

The Liberal Party proponents took pride in having produced supposedly funny visuals that were intelligently contributing to the struggle against extreme right politics of representation. They situated themselves in the tradition of the Enlightenment. In their "enlightened" visuals, Black masculinity and femininity are presented as objects of sexual consumption. Whether horrific or delightful, Black bodies emerge in these examples as disposable. Black Swiss citizens were the only parties who proposed non-controlling and self-staged humanizing images of Blackness. However, their resisting images are absent from the collective memory of that important controversy. As exemplified by this case study, despite the increasing visibility and circulation—thanks to digital culture—of Black self-representations that counter controlling images, Baldwin's analysis remains very relevant for understanding the sexual racialization of both Black masculinity and femininity.

Bacchetta: Such a disposability of Black and brown bodies played out along similar lines in the campaign led by the French neoliberal organization *SOS Racisme*, founded by the (non-)Socialist Party. The organization produced posters of young cisgender Black and Arab women, with the slogan: "At least I am prettier than Le Pen"—in reference to Marine Le Pen, the leader of the extreme right-wing National Front. They thereby framed young Black and Arab women as sex objects, and as potentially appropriable, presumably by white French men. This campaign—lacking an intersectional analytic and inscribed within neoliberalism—reproduced sexism in the name of antiracism.

I also want to point toward Baldwin's relevance for understanding the U.S.A. Within the Black radical tradition, one can connect his work with the long history of literature devoted to what Charles Stember, writing in the 1970s, called "sexual racism."[17] Stember unpacks controlling images of Black masculinity and Black femininity, and how they correlate with living Black bodies in dominant discourses. That early work does not discuss nonheterosexual, transgender, nonbinary, or other sexually and genderly a-normative subjects. More recent scholarly work considers racialized sexualization as a process of a-normativization, wherein racialized bodies are assigned to sexual excess or sexual lack. Baldwin contributed to and reinforces this insight when he remarks that the Black body was de-sexed. Some Black feminists have further theorized such a logic with the notion of "ungendering."[18] The dominant culture's binary representational regime of racialized sexualization, of attributing lack (here of gender and sex as Baldwin points out)—and alternatively *excess*—to subalternly racialized bodies is still very much alive.

Regarding your question on self-representation, Black feminists and nonfeminists have produced a plethora of self-representations. They circulate in alternative cinema, art, media, and literature throughout Black popular culture. However, the dominant culture remains white-centric and Blackphobic. When Barack Obama was president of the U.S.A., mainstream magazines published insulting articles and photoshopped pictures of his family. In short, someone can be in the U.S.A.'s highest political position and still be subjected to sexualized racism.

Michel: On the matter of self-representation and sexual a-normativation of Blackness, I want to mention one very interesting platform called *Afrosexology*, which claims that Black liberation also begins with the possibility for self-narrations of pleasure.[19] Its purpose, beyond representation, sheds lights on the constrained relations of Black people with their possibility and freedom to experience pleasure in all the ways they want to. This is a big issue, because Black women, or gender nonconforming people, especially tend to be deemed either as excessively sexual or excessively respectable. What is possible between these two sides? What is the narrative that people can reclaim for themselves?

"Trapped in history": Everyday Racism, Historicity, and the Politics of Space

Purtschert: We turn to a passage from the essay "Stranger in the Village" from 1953. Pierre Koralnik, a Swiss filmmaker, returned to the Swiss town, Leukerbad,

with Baldwin. They made a film-essay, with Baldwin reciting the text, roughly ten years later, in 1962, and so we present stills from the film. In the essay itself, Baldwin remarks:

> Joyce is right about history being a nightmare—but it may be the nightmare from which no one can awaken. People are trapped in history and history is trapped in them […]
>
> I thought of white men arriving for the first time in an African village, strangers there, as I am a stranger here, and tried to imagine the astounded populace touching their hair and marveling at the color of their skin. But there is a great difference between being the first white man to be seen by Africans and being the first black man to be seen by whites. The white man takes the astonishment as tribute, for he arrives to conquer and to convert the natives, whose inferiority in relation to himself is not even to be questioned; whereas I, without a thought of conquest, find myself among a people whose culture controls me, has even, in a sense, created me, people who have cost me more in anguish and rage than they will ever know, who yet do not even know of my existence. The astonishment with which I might have greeted them, should they have stumbled into my African village a few hundred years ago, might have rejoiced their hearts. But the astonishment with which they greet me today can only poison mine.[20]

Pinto: The film and the text depict episodes of everyday racism from about half a century ago in the Swiss village of Leukerbad: for example, the touching of hair, the rubbing of skin, the stares of horror and wonder, the refusal to call Baldwin by his name, blackface, and the Christian buying of Black souls (Figures 1–4). In Switzerland we are coming to the end of Carnival Season. My Facebook feed during the month of February is filled with outcries about blackface and brownface. When I compare them to the images in the film, I wonder about their historicity?[21] Are we trapped in a colonial time-loop? What has shifted in these images since the 1950s? Do these episodes of everyday racism play out differently today?

Michel: Blackface, hands in the hair, depersonalization, appropriation of the body, and Black servant figurines are familiar scenes of everyday racism in today's Switzerland. I am particularly struck by today's ongoing circulation of artefacts that echo the Black figurines that the white villagers were buying to save African souls. For instance, in French-speaking Switzerland, you will encounter the "Sambo"-type figure of "Y'a bon Banania" on cups, boxes, and other products in vintage boutiques, restaurants, and in your friends' spaces.[22] What is the historicity of the images in the film then? Baldwin writes that "we are trapped in history." His words speak to my first impression: the past has not passed, it is still with us.

However, I want to complicate this first diagnosis with the help of my attempt to conceptualize what I call the "politics of postcoloniality." This notion points toward the constant negotiation of the weight of the racist and colonial past in today's lives and social relations in Switzerland and Europe in general.[23] In the "politics of postcoloniality," postcoloniality is understood as an entanglement of spaces and times. I rely on postcolonial perspectives, as the latter help us to approach history as not just being in the past, but as still having an impact on us. The past still resonates within, with, and on our bodies. In other words, the ways

Figure 1 Girl being pushed by other girls to shake Baldwin's hand (still from Pierre Koralnik, "Un Étranger dans le Village", copyright RTS Radio Télévision Suisse, Switzerland, 1962, 5:00).

we are embodied are constituted by the long colonial history. With this I mean all of us, not just racialized minorities, as whiteness is also embodied; it is a project constituted by history. Postcolonial studies are not only helpful to think about the historicity of the images of the Leukerbad documentary, but also of *I Am Not Your Negro*. Even if he might not relate his filmmaking to a postcolonial approach, Raoul Peck juxtaposes archives from the 1930s and from the 1960s with images and media footage from today. He sees the continuities and the links between the past and the present, and how the past has an impact on Black lives and horizons.

Now it is the "politics" in "politics of postcoloniality" giving me hope beyond history's trap. History exerts a weight on us, but we can also put weight on history. We can be accountable for our history, we can act upon the past. Engaging in the politics of postcoloniality means asking which past we want. How do we acknowledge the past? What do we do with the incessant reiteration of blackface? Do we really want this tradition to persist? An important debate has recently taken place in French-speaking Switzerland. One radio show decided to invite young Black Swiss commentators to discuss the use of blackface by a famous French soccer player.[24] The unavoidability of Black and brown voices within such debates constitutes a turn in the politics of postcoloniality. Afro-Europeans, Black minorities, and people of color have come to occupy a space in Europe and work toward holding their

Figure 2 A crowd of children following James Baldwin through the village (still from Pierre Koralnik, "Un Étranger dans le Village", copyright RTS Radio Télévision Suisse, Switzerland, 1962, 16:32).

collectivities accountable for the ongoing unfolding of the history of racism, giving an unprecedented direction to the negotiation of history's bearing upon us.

Bacchetta: When Baldwin says that "people are trapped in history and history is trapped in them," it is a statement about relations of power and subject formation, although I want to emphasize the sarcasm in this passage as well. On the one hand, Baldwin points to and analyzes a reality: the disjuncture and difference of disparately situated subjects; the place of history; how white "arrival" is untainted by prior controlling images while Black "arrival" is determined by them. Baldwin invokes a painful irony about white self-perception and white subjective relationality to historicity and to history. In the racist contexts that Baldwin lives in, whites can imagine themselves as human origin and as neutral subjects of history, the present and futurity, while they imagine Black people as a-historical, specific, caught in the past and always behind. All of this takes place in a present context of the multidimensional dispossession, oppression, and exploitation of Black bodies. Baldwin makes clear that differential "arrivals" cannot be understood without understanding the context of relations of power.

On the other hand, Baldwin communicates a kind of a hope that Europe is better than the U.S.A. in continuity with many other African Americans, then and today. Without generalizing, many African Americans who leave the U.S.A. feel that Europe is better for a multitude of reasons, including because in Europe they

Figure 3 Baldwin inserting coins into a money box with a black servant figurine on top (still from Pierre Koralnik, "Un Étranger dans le Village", copyright RTS Radio Télévision Suisse, Switzerland, 1962, 6:59).

are not as exposed to relationships with the descendants of U.S. slave owners. Stephen Small, in a recent book on Black Europe, delineates several points of differentiation for Black life between Europe and the U.S.A.[25] One of the main differences is historical: European racism did not develop alongside the sizable presence of Black people on the continent; it began to develop before Black people had gotten to continental Europe in greater numbers. In contrast, in the U.S.A., anti-Black racism developed in a relationship that was massively intimate: present, face-to-face, but also body-to-body under conditions of enslavement. Small argues that in continental Europe, racism arrived with less proximity, largely via colonial discourse. European racism was elaborated in the work of major philosophers and scientists. If the racial relationship in continental Europe is initially less intimate, less widely face-to-face, body-to-body, then it makes sense that Baldwin can perceive it as being less intense—even if this is not the case for non-U.S. people of color who live here today.

Pinto: Baldwin's focus lies in an analysis of the U.S.A. So, as he is looking at Leukerbad or Europe, he does so to differentiate it from the U.S.A. Thereby this experience of intimate coexistence between Black and white people becomes central for the U.S.A. and is constructed in opposition to a Europe that for Baldwin has never known any critical mass of coexistence of Black and white. As a Black European, who has worked on rendering visible a historical Black presence in Switzerland, I would argue Baldwin's U.S.A./Europe comparison presents a risk. It might feed

Figure 4 Money box for missionary donations is carried by a child in blackface (still from Pierre Koralnik, "Un Étranger dans le Village", copyright RTS Radio Télévision Suisse, Switzerland, 1962, 7:06).

into the figure of the "stranger," of the person of color being "an eternal newcomer" to Europe, to quote Fatima El-Tayeb.[26] Baldwin seems to reinstate the narrative that people of color cannot really be from Europe because originally there were only white Europeans. I am wondering about the effects of such a narrative for antiracist, Black, and people of color movements in Europe? What happens if we take a little distance from Baldwin's perspective—Europe as a mediation to think the U.S.A.—and look at Europe per se?

Bacchetta: You are right. Baldwin's narrative only makes sense in a comparative sense centered on the U.S.A. It is a different matter altogether if we think centrally about Europe. From a continental European perspective, Baldwin does indeed come dangerously close to reproducing the constant externalization of people of color. Europeans of color have always existed in continental Europe, not only in the non-continental parts; there are examples of this within my own family. However, Baldwin's considerations are about scale, about different scales of relatively large direct spatial racial intimacy. Black presence refers here to Black avoidability or unavoidability for white people on a daily basis. White people in the continental U.S.A. encounter Black people everywhere in the country, whether they want to or not. Some major continental U.S. cities are majority Black, such as Detroit or Jackson, that are over 80 percent Black. Such proportions are not present in continental France, historically.

Michel: I have sought to understand why *I Am Not Your Negro* was so successful in Switzerland. I have been doing research and been active on questions of race and racism for more than a decade and now, suddenly, those objects of research seem more legitimate thanks to *I Am Not Your Negro*, or Ta-Nehisi Coates's writings. The success of those cultural productions is related to the fact that they are dealing primarily with the U.S.A.

In "Stranger in the Village", Baldwin uses the village as a scene from which he deploys critical thoughts about the logics of racism, race, and colonialism in the U.S.A. One could say that he slightly instrumentalizes Switzerland in order to be critical about his own society—I see no problem with such a process. However, should such a process be taken up by us living and working here, in the European context marked by a taboo of race? Is it not risky to rely on an African American to prove the existence of race and racism in Switzerland? I have purposefully chosen not to cite "Stranger in the Village" in discussions about the existence of race here, in order to avoid the risk of feeding the ongoing externalizing of race and racism from the history of Europe. I avoid reproducing the narrative that Europe is homogeneous and not entangled with and influenced by other spaces and histories. Certain places in Europe have Black populations of 80 percent. They are not on the continent, but in Guadeloupe, Martinique, Guiana, which are (postcolonial) overseas departments of France, thus parts of Europe. However, these territories and populations are disconnected from the imagination of Europe. In a similar vein, when people think of Europe, they cannot think about the Haitian Revolution as being part of world history or the history of Europe specifically. They cannot imagine that this revolutionary event inspired the people of France.[27]

By evoking potentially problematic receptions of Baldwin's essay or Peck's movie, I do not aim to say that we should not read one or watch the other. Indeed, those materials allow us—especially us Afro-Europeans—to connect with converging experiences and to translate these experiences from the U.S.A. to our own contexts. However, such connections and translations are absent from the mainstream critique. This is why I suggest that the success of Peck's movie must be partly associated with the ongoing politics of externalization of race and racism from Europe. The movie can receive an award in the U.K., and it can be produced by the Radio Télévision Suisse (the Swiss public broadcasting organization), because it is centered on the U.S.A. But do we have examples of documentaries or movies about race and racism in Switzerland that have been funded by Swiss television?

Purtschert: I truly think we have to read this essay critically, including Baldwin's idea of being the first Black person whom the villagers of Leukerbad have ever seen. Supposedly, this is the way in which the village inhabitants have staged the encounter with Baldwin, and thus his experience. However, it is most probably not true that he was the first Black person in Leukerbad. The long history of Black people in Switzerland has continuously been erased up to present day.[28] It is thus not surprising that Baldwin did not come across any traces of this history. In addition, Leukerbad was not just the small and remote village Baldwin described, it

was also part of an international trade route across the Alps, and a famous tourist destination.[29] Following critical historians of Switzerland, it seems important to ask how much the image of the secluded Alpine village has been part of a nationalist imaginary that dates back to the late nineteenth century, and might have informed Baldwin's view of Leukerbad as well.

Nevertheless, Baldwin provides us with helpful tools to work on postcolonial Switzerland. For instance, his notion of "innocence" speaks to the complete amnesia of colonial history, a mental state "in which black men do not exist."[30] Gloria Wekker's coining of "white innocence" for the Netherlands also works very well in the Swiss context, where "neutrality" is constantly mobilized to claim that the country stood outside of the horrors of modern history, had seemingly nothing to do with the transatlantic slave trade, colonialism, the two world wars, or fascism.[31] Baldwin offers us a powerful analysis of the careful crafting of such an innocence. What he calls "naïveté" in his essay relates not only to political discourse, but also to the powerful foundations of everyday racism in Switzerland. Baldwin writes: "wherever I passed, the first summer I was here, among the native villagers or among the lame, a wind passed with me—of astonishment, curiosity, amusement, and outrage."[32] This captures powerfully how Baldwin was confronted by being made a "spectacle of the other," which had a very intense affective dimension, as the quote shows. From the white Swiss perspective, however, people asserted the belief that they followed an innocent and pure interest in the strange Other, which was void of any historical traces or colonial entanglements. As you, Michel and Pinto have both reminded us, if one takes into account the experience of Black people in Switzerland, who are constantly invoked as Others, reverting to Baldwin's analysis of whiteness as innocence seems meaningful.

Michel: Of course, the essay and a lot of mechanisms he describes are important resources for us to think about race in postcolonial Switzerland, especially about what you, Purtschert, alongside two colleagues have relevantly called "colonialism without colonies."[33] The "without" says a lot of things. It is not just that Switzerland was colonial without having colonies, it is also that it defines itself and thinks of itself as a place where colonialism, colonial relations of power, colonial imaginaries, and colonial narratives did not take place. Your concept points toward that possibility for Switzerland to always redefine itself as an innocent nation, as having nothing to do with the colonial past, nor with racism.

Baldwin's analysis of astonishment is fascinating in "Stranger in the Village." He says that there are some people who have the privilege of always discovering the stranger and being astonished, without having to take responsibility for history, in contrast to him. When he is the object of this astonishment, it poisons him. There is no possibility for a real encounter between himself and the residents of this village. Even if Black people were not hugely present in Switzerland at the time, they were the objects of a huge imaginary. The children evoked by Baldwin had already encountered him, because they had already heard many stories about people of African descent; there is no space for him to be encountered as a human.

But at the same time the people who encounter him, mock him, and touch him do so while pretending that those very modes of encounter are rooted in an innocent form of astonishment (see Figures 1–2). Baldwin leads us to understand how racializiation and self-exoneration go hand-in-hand.

Bacchetta: That part of the essay also reminds me of Frantz Fanon's chapter "The Fact of Blackness," where a white child says, "Look ma, a Negro."[34] It makes me reflect on the construction of children—especially white children—as innocent, whereas Baldwin is coming from a country where Black children are constructed as always already guilty, adultlike subjects and imagined as threatening. The recent publicity around the heinous killing of 12-year-old Tamir Rice by police, while playing alone in a park with a toy gun, visibilizes a racialized disparity in the societal construction of innocence and the figure of the child—a central concern for both Fanon and Baldwin.

"White no longer": The Challenges of European Queer, Feminist Movements of Color

> This world is white no longer, and it will never be white again.[35]

Pinto: I would like to turn to think about Black and people of color movements in Europe. What are the challenges that these movements face today? What problems do they address? What is the role of feminist and queer perspectives within those movements?

Bacchetta: In France, the Black feminist movement is currently strong. It is autonomous, not separatist. It is also under attack. For example, after having publicized its Black-only showing and discussion of the film *Black Panther*, the Black feminist group Mwasi, founded in 2014 in Paris, was immediately targeted.[36] The white, left, human rights group LICRA (International League against Racism and Anti-semitism) accused Mwasi of "anti-white racism" and of being against the values of the French Republic. Continental France constitutes a multitude of spaces that are completely white. LICRA has never protested against them. The accusation of "anti-white racism" or "reverse racism" is only possible in the context of unexamined structural coloniality and racism.

Autonomous groups of queers of color have existed since 1999, when the Group du 6 novembre—the first autonomous lesbian of color group in France—was founded. Prior to that, there were feminist of color groups such as the Black feminist group Mouvement des Femmes Noires (MODEFEN). France has a long history of feminist and queer of color analytics, "artivisms," and activisms, but these have been erased from French feminist and LGBTQ history, as though they were not French, and their analytics, "artivisms," and activisms did not take place on French soil.[37]

Right now, there is an enormous uprising of Black feminist and Black queer and transgender mobilizations in France. There are autonomous Black feminist and Black queer groups as well as autonomous groups of feminists and queers of color with

Black members. Examples of the latter are LOCs (Lesbians of Color), the Decolonizing Sexualities Network, the groups Transnational QTPOC (Queer and Trans People of Color), LTQ Revolutionaries, and more. French Black feminists and queers are weaving transnational links with a broader pan-African movement and with the heterogeneous decolonial movement. French Black activists are also connected with specific groups such as Black Lives Matter, which is now an international movement, with different resonances in disparate places, because the contexts are not identical. In the U.S.A., Black Lives Matter was founded by three queer-identified Black feminists, and its political stances against racism are queer-sensitive. However, in France, Black Lives Matter is not close to its queer roots.

Michel: We should name local Black feminists, intersectional, and antiracist groups in Switzerland such as Bla*Sh, that Pinto co-founded.[38] It is an important group that does a lot to render certain Black Swiss and European figures visible, as well as talking differently about race and racism.[39] New groups, such as Outrage and A qui le tour, have formed especially in the canton of Vaud—in Lausanne—after extreme police violence led to the deaths of two Black men.[40] A commonality among most of these movements, and I am not naming all of them, is their anchorage at the local level given the linguistic barriers, but also the difficulty for nonwhites to identify with the Swiss nation.

Thus, the challenge pertains to the possibility for scattered local initiatives to connect and last in their varieties and their differences across contexts, across Europe, and across linguistic barriers. Baldwin's life offers perspectives regarding such a challenge. Baldwin was so mobile; we tend to forget that he not only stayed in France and Switzerland, but also in Turkey. In Peck's film, we see Baldwin in London, in Palm Springs, and in New York. He is always traveling, and he says, "I am witness and to be a witness of human experience and black experience I have to travel." Since racism seeks to separate and segregate, his mobility is a testimony of both antiracist resistance and racism's persistence. Baldwin's crossing of borders and spaces at that time is criminalized for most people of color today.

Bacchetta: To further reflect on the challenge of scattering, I want to address the question of coalition. Gathering queer trans people of color (QTPOC) together in one space in France has been a real struggle. The first time we were able to do it with significant numbers was in March 2017 at Queer Week in Paris, when we created a QTPOC Town Hall.[41] The problems of fragmentation that we experience today are caused by deep-seated colonial divide and rule tactics. Our difficulties with coming together are also an effect of how we are differentially co-constituted in relations of power—colonialism, race, gender, class, sexuality—and the differential kinds of capital—financial, social, cultural, corporeal privilege—we have. Nonetheless, we are coming together. Our next QTPOC Town Hall will tackle decoloniality, anticapitalism, and antiracism.[42]

Purtschert: Your description of movements that go beyond national borders draws me to the last sentence of Baldwin's essay "Stranger in the Village": "This world is white no longer, and it will never be white again." I would like to conclude the

discussion by asking what it means to take this statement seriously? How does this crucial insight inform our postcolonial present, culturally, politically, and socially?

Bacchetta: My hope is that there will not be two worlds: one that remains the dominant white world and then the rest of us as the Other. I am hoping that we can get free, transform ourselves and the planet, and invent new modes of life. I do not know why I have such hope, but I think that otherwise one just drops dead. Those of us who have not yet dropped dead, or who have not become the living dead—who are alive—have to have hope.

Michel: We can also change the tense of this last sentence from Baldwin's essay, and say that the world was never white. The movie by Raoul Peck shows us how whiteness is a phantasmatic construction. This construction is real in its effects, but let us nonetheless think of a world that was never white. What happens if we think this way? What kind of space does such thought open for people who have multiple belongings, people who do not want to be defined merely in relation to one space and one national history, or one continental history? If we think with this sentence and bring it home, I think it gives us a lot of space for our identities and their complexity. It allows us to breathe, but also to act with these complexities and multiple identities, gendered, racialized, cultural, religious, and so forth.

Afterword

Since the above discussion took place in early 2018, the aforementioned feminist, queer, and trans* of color movement(s) have flourished, and intensified translocal connections across Europe in resistance to racist bordering. For instance, the French collective Mwasi initiated an "Afrofemtour" through major cities in Europe for 2019–20, co-organized with local and other Afro-feminist and Black queer collectives.[43] Online accessible media and platforms stemming from people of color movements have thrived. Among numerous examples are the podcasts *le Tchip* and *Kiffe ta race*, centered on racial relations in France and hosted by binge audio; the academic podcast *Decolonization in Action*, created at the Max-Planck Institute for the History of Science; and *Vocal About It*, a podcast initiated privately in Brussels.[44] We also wish to evoke the pan-African and multilingual website *Cases Rebelles*, the various online and translocal events organized by the European Race and Imagery Foundations (ERIF), as well as the now well-established U.K. feminist and queer of color media platform gal-dem.[45]

Through the efforts of Black and of color movements themselves, James Baldwin's presence in continental Europe, especially in Switzerland and France, has gained acknowledgment within dominant culture. However, his reflections on Europe as a racialized space remain widely unaddressed. Will future conferences on Baldwin, like the one originally slated to convene in Saint-Paul de Vence in 2020, also address his transatlantic reverberations, or will they run the risk of once again omitting nonwhite queer struggles in Europe, especially if none of the key presenters are scholars working on racialized Europe? At the time of this writing, this remains to be seen.[46]

Lastly, with regard to the increasing reception of James Baldwin in European universities, we want to ask what it means when we say "the world is white no longer, and will never be white again" in a neoliberal university, set within a European context of racial taboo? Critical race scholars, especially women and queer of color scholars, have shed light on depoliticized appropriations of terms and concepts associated with radical histories of resistance, such as "postcolonial," "intersectional," "decolonial," and "epistemologies of the global south(s)." Within academia, such terms have been invoked to demonstrate "marketable expertise" on "diversity," while the existing forms of knowledge production, personnel policy, curricula, and canon formation have largely persisted in maintaining Black and other people of color's bodies and voices in precarious positions within institutions of knowledge.[47]

Notes

1 For examples, see Matt Brim, *James Baldwin and the Queer Imagination* (Ann Arbor, MI, University of Michigan Press, 2014); Consuela Francis, *The Critical Reception of James Baldwin, 1963–2010: "An Honest Man and a Good Writer"* (Rochester, NY, Camden House, 2014); and the first five volumes of *James Baldwin Review*.

2 William J. Maxwell, "Born-Again, Seen-Again James Baldwin: Post-Postracial Criticism and the Literary History of Black Lives Matter," *American Literary History*, 28:4 (2016), pp. 812–27; Ta-Nehisi Coates, *Between the World and Me* (New York, Spiegel & Grau, 2017).

3 This article is an adapted transcript of a roundtable at the cultural center Kosmos in Zürich, after the screening of Raoul Peck's film on 9 February 2018. The screening and discussion were a prelude to the conference, "'The Evidence of Things not Seen.' Queering Europe with James Baldwin," in February 2018 at the Interdisciplinary Center of Gender Studies at the University of Bern, www.izfg.unibe.ch/forschung/emanzipatorische_bewegungen/the_evidence_of_things_not_seen/index_ger.html (accessed 18 November 2019). Invited guests were Noémi Michel and Paola Bacchetta, and the discussion was facilitated by Jovita dos Santos Pinto and Patricia Purtschert.

4 For the reception of "Stranger in the Village" in Switzerland, see Patricia Purtschert and H. Fischer-Tiné, "The End of Innocence: Debating Colonialism in Switzerland," in Patricia Purtschert and H. Fischer-Tiné (eds.), *Colonial Switzerland: Rethinking Switzerland from the Margins* (Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), pp. 1–26; Patricia Purtschert, *Kolonialität und Geschlecht im 20. Jahrhundert. Eine Geschichte der weissen Schweiz* (Bielefeld, transcript, 2019), pp. 62–8; Ntando Cele, "Stranger," blog entry, 2 January 2014, www.ntandocl.blogspot.com (accessed 27 March 2019). On 4 March 2018 the Black artist Sasha Huber installed a portrait of James Baldwin made with a staple gun on the shutter of the house where Baldwin used to stay in the village discussed in this article; see S. Huber, "The firsts—James Baldwin," blog entry, 2018, www.sashahuber.com/?-cat=10075&lang=fi&mstr=10009 (accessed 27 March 2019). For additional perspectives on the essay, see also Teju Cole, "Black Body: Rereading James Baldwin's 'Stranger in the Village,'" *New Yorker*, 19 August 2014, www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/black-body-re-reading-james-baldwins-stranger-village (accessed 15 June 2020); Teju Cole, "Schwarzer Körper," *Das Magazin*, 19 August 2014, pp. 8–17; James Baldwin, *Fremder im Dorf. Ein Schwarzer New Yorker in Leukerbad* (Zürich, Sacré, 2011); Christian Walther,

"Fremd". Kurzfilm über James Baldwin (Insertfilm/SRF, 2013); Michael Stauffer and R. Hermann, *"Wie ein Schaf in der Wüste". Passage Sendung* (SRF, 2012).

5 Brim, *James Baldwin and the Queer Imagination*, p. 175.

6 James Baldwin, *I Am Not Your Negro (Compiled and Edited by Raoul Peck)* (London, Penguin, 2017), p. 20.

7 *Ibid*., p. 63.

8 Combahee River Collective, "A Black Feminist Statement," in Akasha (G. T.) Hull, Patricia Bell-Scott, Barbara Smith (eds.), *But Some of Us Are Brave: Black Women's Studies* (Old Westbury, NY, Feminist Press, 1982), pp. 13–22; Paola Bacchetta, "Dyketactics!," in Howard Chiang et al. (eds.), *Global Encyclopedia of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer History* (New York, Macmillan, 2019), pp. 483–6; Gloria Anzaldúa and Cherríe Moraga (eds.), *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color* (New York, Kitchen Table, 1983).

9 For an influential example of non-U.S. Black womanism, see Maryse Condé, *La Vie sans fard* (Paris, Latte, 2012).

10 W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk: Essays and Sketches* (New York, Magnavision, 1903); Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (New York, Grove Press, 2008).

11 Cedric Robinson, *Black Marxism: The Making of a Black Radical Tradition* (Chapel Hill, NC, University of North Carolina Press, 2000).

12 *Ibid*., p. 171.

13 See, for example, Abdul R. JanMohamed, *The Death-Bound-Subject: Richard Wright's Archaeology of Death* (Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2005).

14 On the night of 31 December 2015, during New Year's Eve celebration, numerous thefts and sexual assaults took place in public places in Cologne and in other German cities. The mainstream media mainly ascribed these attacks to asylum seekers of Arab and/or North African descent, thereby drawing on racist images of men of color. This sparked a large and highly controversial debate about current (anti-)refugee politics and about the ways in which sexism and racism are interconnected in contemporary Germany. See Gabriele Dietze, *Sexueller Exzeptionalismus. Überlegenheitsnarrative in Migrationsabwehr und Rechtspopulismus* (Bielefeld, transcript, 2019), pp. 41–58; Stefanie C. Boulila and Christiane Carri, "On Cologne: Gender, Migration and Unacknowledged Racisms in Germany," *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 24:3 (2017), pp. 286–93.

15 Noémi Michel, "Sheepology: The Postcolonial Politics of Raceless Racism in Switzerland," *Postcolonial Studies*, 18:4 (2015), pp. 410–26.

16 "Controlling images" is a term that stresses that representations, ideas, and images have material effects on the lives of all people who are exposed to them, albeit differentially. See the chapter "Mammies, Matriarchs, and Other Controlling Images," in Patricia Hill Collins, *Black Feminist Thought* (New York, Routledge, 2000), pp. 79–96.

17 Charles Herbert Stember, *Sexual Racism: The Emotional Barrier to an Integrated Society* (New York, Elsevier, 1976).

18 Hortense Spillers proposes the notion of "ungendering" to describe how Black bodies were transformed into gender-undifferentiated Black flesh during the Middle Passage; see Hortense Spillers, *Black, White and in Color: Essays on American Literature and Culture* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2003). In separate works, Samantha Pinto and Jennifer Nash point out that the idea of Black ungendering and the ungendered Black body has much resonance in Afro-pessimism scholarship, especially in the current context of theorizations of Black death and how Black life is lived alongside and with Black death; see Samantha Pinto, "Black Feminist Literacies: Ungendering, Flesh, and

Post-Spillers Epistemologies of Embodied and Emotional Justice," *Journal of Black Sexuality and Relationships*, 4:1 (2017), pp. 25–45; Jennifer C. Nash, *Black Feminism Reimagined after Intersectionality* (Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2019), pp. 20–1.

19 Afrosexology, www.afrosexology.com (accessed 6 February 2019).

20 James Baldwin, "Stranger in the Village," in *Notes of a Native Son* (Boston, MA, Beacon Press, 1984), pp. 162–4.

21 Using the term *historicity*, we ask not simply about the history of these images, but about *how* these images are embedded in historical time and play out differently through time. This differentiation seems pertinent after a long critique of the colonial binary of historical time (and its subjects) as a linearly evolving process in opposition to things and subjects without history. For postcolonial discussions of history and historicity, see Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology makes its Subjects* (New York, Columbia University Press, 2014); Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 2008).

22 Banania is a French chocolate and banana flavored beverage brand that was first commercialized in the wake of World War I. The advertizing and customizing of this product shows a caricatured Senegalese trooper, smiling over the product while exclaiming "Y a bon!" in French pidgin. See Anne Donadey, "'Y'a Bon Banania': Ethics and Cultural Criticism in the Colonial Context," *French Cultural Studies*, 11:31 (2000), pp. 9–29.

23 Michel, "Sheepology", p. 411.

24 "'Blackfacing', Histoire d'un Racisme Ordinaire," *Radio Lac*, 20 December 2017, www.radiolac.ch/podcasts/le-8220Blackfacing8221-histoire-d8217un-racisme-ordinaire-20122017-3/ (accessed 29 March 2019).

25 Stephen Small, *20 Questions and Answers on Black Europe* (Amsterdam, Amrit, 2018).

26 On the history of Black women in Switzerland, see Jovita dos Santos Pinto, "Spuren. Eine Geschichte Schwarzer Frauen in der Schweiz," in Shelley Berlowitz, Elisabeth Joris, and Zeedah Meierhofer-Mangeli (eds.), *Terra incognita? Der Treffpunkt Schwarzer Frauen in Zürich* (Zürich, Limmat, 2013), pp. 143–85. On the figure of the "eternal newcomer," see Fatima El-Tayeb, *European Others: Queering Ethnicity in Postnational Europe* (Minneapolis, MN, University of Minnesota Press, 2011), p. xx.

27 On the silencing of the Haitian Revolution, see Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston, MA, Beacon Press, 1995).

28 On the erasure of Black history in Switzerland, see Pinto, "Spuren."

29 See Purtschert and Fischer-Tiné, "The End of Innocence," p. 3.

30 Baldwin, "Stranger in the Village," p. 174.

31 Gloria Wekker, *White Innocence. Paradoxes of Colonialism and Race* (Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 2016).

32 Baldwin, "Stranger in the Village," p. 161.

33 On the concept of "colonialism without colonies," see Patricia Purtschert, Francesca Falk, and Barbara Lüthi, "Switzerland and 'Colonialism without Colonies,'" *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies*, 18:2 (2015), pp. 286–302.

34 Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) (London, Pluto Press, 2008), pp. 82–108.

35 Baldwin, "Stranger in the Village," p. 175.

36 Mwasi Collectif Afrofeministe, https://mwasicollectif.com/ (accessed 29 March 2019).

37 On the history of queer of color groups in France and continental Europe, see Paola Bacchetta, "QTPOC Critiques of 'Post-Raciality,' Segregationality, Coloniality and Capitalism in France," in Sandeep Bakshi, Suhraiya Jivraj, and Silvia Possado (eds.), *Decolonizing Sexuality: Transnational Perspectives, Critical Interventions* (London, Counterpress,

2016), pp. 264–81; Paola Bacchetta and Jin Haritaworn, "There Are Many Transatlantics: Homonationalism, Homotransnationalism and Feminist-Queer-Trans of Color Theories and Practices," in Kathy Davis and Mary Evans (eds.), *Transatlantic Conversations: Feminism as Travelling Theory* (Farnham, Ashgate, 2011), pp. 127–44; Paola Bacchetta, "Co-Formations: sur les spatialités de résistance de lesbiennes 'of Color' en France," *Genre, sexualité et société*, 1 (2009), http://gss.revues.org; Paola Bacchetta, Fatima El-Tayeb, and Jin Haritaworn, "Queers of Color and (De)Colonial Spaces in Europe," in Paola Bacchetta, Sunaina Maira, and Howard Winant (eds.), *Global Raciality: Empire, Postcoloniality, Decoloniality* (New York, Routledge, 2019), pp. 158–70.

38 Bla*Sh, https://facebook.com/NetzwerkBlackShe/ (accessed 27 March 2019).

39 In the (very small) French-speaking part of Switzerland, there are three intersectional feminist collectives: Faites des Vagues (https://fr-fr.facebook.com/faitesdesvagues/), the Collectif AfroSwiss (https://collectifafroswiss.wordpress.com/author/collectifafroswiss/), and the Collectif Amani (www.instagram.com/collectifamani/, all accessed 12 December 2019).

40 For a reflection on racial profiling in raceless Switzerland, see Noémi Michel, "Racial Profiling und die Tabuisierung von Rasse," in Mohamed Wa Baile et. al. (eds.), *Racial Profiling. Struktureller Rassismus und antirassistischer Widerstand* (Bielefeld, transcript, 2019), pp. 87–106. On the groups formed in the wake of the incidents in Vaud, see Outrage Collectif, https://outragecollectif.noblogs.org/ (accessed 27 March 2019), "À Qui le Tour? Un Nouveau Collectif Antiraciste," *solidaritéS*, 305 (2017), p. 15, www.solidarites.ch/journal/d/article/7998/A-qui-le-tour-Un-nouveau-collectif-antiraciste (accessed 27 March 2019).

41 Queer Week Edition 2017, "Trajectoires," www.queerweek.com/2017/programme-queer-week-2017.pdf (accessed 27 March 2019).

42 Queer Week Edition 2018, "Town Hall—Queer and Trans Politics of Color," www.queerweek.com/2018/inauguration-queer-and-trans-politics-of-color-town-hall/ (accessed 9 December 2019).

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44 On the podcasts mentioned, see https://soundcloud.com/le-tchip; https://soundcloud.com/kiffe-ta-race; https://vocalaboutit.podbean.com; https://decolonizationinaction.com (all accessed 10 December 2019).

45 On the platforms mentioned, see www.cases-rebelles.org/, http://gal-dem.com/ (both accessed 12 December 2019), and ERIF's latest campaign, Quotes of Resistance, which amplifies antiracist voices across Europe. See https://quotesofresistance.wordpress.com/ (accessed 12 December 2019).

46 www.lamaisonbaldwin.fr/conference2020 (accessed 10 December 2019). The conference, like so many other events, was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. As of this writing in April of 2020, the conference is being planned instead for 2021.

47 See the contributions and testimonies by Black women and women of color in "Part IV Surviving the Academy" of the edited volume by Akwugo Emejulu and Francesca Sobande, *To Exist Is to Resist: Black Feminism in Europe* (London, Pluto Press, 2019). See Sirma Bilge, "Intersectionality Undone. Saving Intersectionality from Feminist Intersectionality Studies," *Du Bois Review*, 10:2 (2013), pp. 405–24; Vanessa Naef and Nora Trenkel, "Es darf nicht alles beim Alten bleiben in den Gender Studies!," *gender-studies. Zeitschrift des Interdisziplinären Zentrums für Geschlechterforschung IZFG*, 32 (2018), pp. 8–11; Patricia Purtschert, "Prolog: Mehr als ein Schlagwort. Dekolonisieren (in) der Postkolonialen Schweiz," *Tsantsa*, 24 (2019), pp. 14–23.

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Contributors' Biographies

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Rassismus und antirassistischer Widerstand (co-edited with Mohamed Wa Baile, Serena O. Dankwa, Tarek Naguib, and Sarah Schilliger; transcript, 2019), *Colonial Switzerland: Rethinking Colonialism from the Margins* (co-edited with Harald Fischer-Tiné; Palgrave, 2015), *Postkoloniale Schweiz. Formen und Folgen eines Kolonialismus ohne Kolonien* (co-edited with Barbara Lüthi and Francesca Falk; transcript, 2012), and *Grenzfiguren. Kultur, Geschlecht und Subjekt bei Hegel und Nietzsche* (Campus, 2006).

Paola Bacchetta is Professor of Gender and Women's Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. She is former director of the Berkeley Gender Consortium, and current co-director of the Political Conflict, Gender and Peoples' Rights Project. She is an Advisory Board member of Berkeley's Center for Race and Gender, and Center for Right Wing Studies. Her books include *Co-Motion: On Feminist and Queer of Color Alliances* (Duke University Press, forthcoming), *Global Racialities: Empire, Postcoloniality, and Decoloniality* (co-edited with Sunaina Maira and Howard Winant, Routledge, 2019), *Femminismi Queer Postcoloniali: critiche transnazionali all'omofobia, all'islamofobia e all'omonazionalismo* (co-edited with Laura Fantone, Ombre Corte, 2015), *Gender in the Hindu Nation* (Women Unlimited, 2004), and *Right-Wing Women: From Conservatives to Extremists around the World* (co-edited with Margaret Power, Routledge, 2002). She is currently co-editing a book entitled *Fatima Mernissi for Our Times* (with Minoo Moallem) and another on lesbian of color writing in France (with Nawo Crawford). She has also published over sixty articles and book chapters on sexuality and racism, transnational and decolonial feminist theory, queer of color theory and practices, decolonizing sexualities, global southern theory, right-wing movements, political conflict, critical theory, and space. Her geographical areas of specialization are France, India, and the U.S.A. Her work has been published in multiple languages. In 2020, she has Fulbright for a current book project on sexuality and colonialism.

Vanessa Naef is pursuing a M.A. in Sociolinguistics and Gender Studies at the University of Bern, Switzerland, and holds a B.A. in German Language and Literature with a Minor in English Languages and Literature. She works at the Interdisciplinary Center for Gender Studies at the University of Bern, Switzerland, in the fields of postcolonialism, feminist and queer theory, and emancipatory movements.